

Sylvanus Doane House
(Doane-Chase House)
Nauset Road
Eastham
Barnstable County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-712

HABS
MASS,
1-EAST
9-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HAB5
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SYLVANUS DOANE HOUSE

HAB5 No. MA-712

Location: East side of Nauset Road.
Eastham.
Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Present Owner: Ralph A. Chase.
Nauset Road, Eastham, Massachusetts.

Present Occupant: Ralph A. Chase.

Present Use: Visible evidence shows that this structure was originally a Cape Cod "house", i.e. half of a double house and a later addition converted it into a double house. The present owner states that it has always been in the Doane family, one of the earliest families to settle in the Eastham area. This house is located within the area of the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Original and subsequent owners Mr. Chase is of the opinion that the house was built by a member of the Doane family. He is the son of Charles W. Chase and Carrie E. Doane Chase, former owners. Dr. Ernest Allen Connally, HABS Historian, in writing about the Harding-Lloyd house, an early Cape Cod house on North Pamet Road in Truro, Barnstable County Massachusetts, reports that it is "quite similar to the Doane-Chase house on Nauset Road, Eastham, where a tablet in the yard announces that it was built by Sylvanus Doane and was the birthplace (in 1767) of Captain Obadiah Doane." This quotation is from Dr. Connally's article "The Cape Cod House: An Introductory Study", soon to be published in The Society of Architectural Historians Journal, Vol. XIX, No. 2, May 1960, pp. 47-56.

Mr. Chase verifies the birth there of Captain Obadiah Doane on information received by him from Abelino Doane, a grandson of Obadiah.

A conflict has arisen, however, on the original date of the building, in a letter from A. E. Snow, Eastham/Orleans "Historian, genealogist, Eastham/Orleans Affairs", addressed to John P. Shaw, Supervisor of the HABS 1960 summer project on Cape Cod. This letter is dated July 12, 1960 and reports, among other things, that "the present Chase house, on the premises of the original Gov. Thos. Prentice house, was built in the 1840's by Capt. Ezekiel Doane. I was acquainted with his son, "Cap" Abelino E. Doane (1857-1941) who lived in that house."

Date of erection From an inspection of the house and comparing it with other Cape Cod houses, notably the Harding-Lloyd house, the opinions of Dr. Connally and Mr. Chase can be followed, and with due respect to the opinion of Mr. Snow, this can be dated in the latter part of the 18th century.

Architect Unknown.

Builder Unknown.

Original plans None known to exist.

Alterations and additions The west room was added onto at an unknown date to make this a "double house". Also, at an early date, a one room addition was added to the north of the house. A frame ell was added to the west side of the house about 1900, according to the present owner.

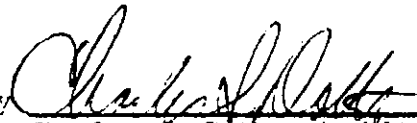
Historical events connected with the structure Evidently this was the birthplace of Captain Obadiah Doane, and possibly built by Sylvanus Doane, descendants of Deacon John Doane (1590-1685) one of the "half dozen richest men in the colony" and an assistant governor and deacon of the Plymouth church for 10 years. Eastham, Massachusetts 1651-1951, Eastham Tercentenary Committee, 1951, pp. 23-25. Mr. Ralph Chase, present owner, reports that the Doane family owned nearly all of the Nauset area in Eastham at one time, and that Deacon John Doane was one of the seven first settlers of the Town of Eastham. A granite marker marks the spot of his homestead which is off of Doane Road, west of the present Coast Guard Station in Eastham.

Important old views None discovered to date.

Sources of information These are documented in the above text.

Likely sources not yet investigated Town Records of Eastham, Mass.; Barnstable County Records, Barnstable, Mass., although these are incomplete prior to 1827 because of a Court House fire in that year which destroyed many of the original Register of Deeds books, along with other records.

Prepared by


Charles S. Botts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
Summer 1960, June 28.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION.

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural interest and merit This is a one and a half story Cape Cod single house of the 13th century, later converted to a "double house", and is typical of the Cape Cod house of that period. This is within the area of the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore.

Condition of fabric Good. The present owner uses the house as his permanent residence, and has kept it in good repair.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

Overall dimensions 22' x 28' originally (from appearances) and converted to a 22' x 37' double house with other additions of 12'-6" x 14'-0" and 16'-6" x 24'-6".

Foundations Wood sills on brick foundations.

Wall Construction Exposed wall of original house in north ell shows vertical plank construction, which is typical of the early Cape Cod houses. Present owner however said that repairs to the south wall of the house revealed it to be 2 x 4 stud construction. Exterior walls are wood shingled, with 6" exposed to the weather.

Chimneys Two over central part of house, and one over west ell.

Openings - doorways and doors Front door is 6 panel door, but was installed in 1945.

windows and shutters 6/9 panes in double hung sash on east side of house, 1st floor and on 2nd floor; 6/6 panes in double hung sash in west room and north room. Exterior window trim does not appear to be original.

Roof - shape, covering Gabled, pitched, wood shingled.

cornice, eaves wood, box cornice; narrow eaves.

dormers none.

INTERIOR

Floor plans - first floor This house has the appearance, from the front of being a "double house", with the central entry flanked by a two window east room and by a two window west room. Close inspection, however, reveals that the original structure was a "Single" house. A definite line of construction is noted at the foundation, in the butted floor boards, and in the double trusses between the original house and the west addition. This addition of a two windowed room is of early construction, and could have been added very early in the history of the house. It is also noted in the original kitchen that it is the correct size for a single house. The west wall of the kitchen is aligned with the west partition of the entry, and could have been the location of the west exterior wall of the house at one time.

The buttery and small bed room or "borning room" are located at the east end of the kitchen, with the bed room next to the front east room and connected to it with a doorway. There is also a door to this bed room and to the buttery off of the kitchen. A hall now separates these rooms from the original kitchen and leads to a one room ell addition, located off of the north east corner of the house. This was added at an unknown date.

Other additions include a 15'-6" x 24'-6" two room ell at the west end of the house which encloses a modern kitchen, a bath room and an office. This was added about 1900 according to the present owner. Stairs to the second floor lead off the entry.

Second floor Three bedrooms are located here, one in the east part and two in the west part of the house, and are separated by a wide hall where the stairs are located.

Cellar There is a round brick cellar located below the north room addition, and is 9'-7" in diameter, with entrance from the outside of the house; 8 x 12 cellar under modern ell on the west.

Stairways One, narrow, leads from entry to second floor. No stairs to cellars, outside openings have space for ladders to be placed there.

Flooring Varies from room to room with original part of house having random width pine boards, 10" to 21" and old addition on the west has 2" and 3" wide flooring.

Wall and ceiling finish Original house, plastered walls and ceilings with stool high wainscoting in first floor east room and original kitchen.

Doorways and doors wood, two and four panel doors.

Trim Original house has early style trim, molded, mitered corners. Old kitchen has south fireplace wall wood paneling.

Hardware Mostly modern.

Lighting Electric

Heating Hot air furnace. The three fireplaces in the east room, west room, and original kitchen on first floor have been blocked at the openings.

SITE

Orientation The house faces south in typical Cape Cod manner, in a well kept area of trees and shrubs.

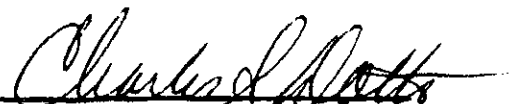
Enclosures No fences.

Outbuildings Single covered barn about 100 yards north of the house.

Walks, driveways No walks; U shaped driveway next to the road.

Landscaping Lawn, shrubbery and trees are well trimmed and present a neat appearance. Planting is informal.

Prepared by


Charles S. Dotts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
Summer 1960, June 28.

References:

HABS measured drawings, Cape Cod Survey I, Eastham Field Office,
Summer 1960.